

**Economic and Social Council**

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New York, 20 May 2008

**Letter dated 3 June 2008 from the Permanent Representative
of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the President
of the Economic and Social Council**

I have the honour to write to you in reference to the special meeting of the Economic and Social Council on the global food crisis, held from 20 to 22 May 2008.

First of all, allow me to convey to you the appreciation of my Government and its thanks for having convened a meeting that certainly provided a valuable opportunity to discuss such a serious matter.

Colombia is convinced that the United Nations must address the global food problem through the promotion of an open and continuing dialogue among Member States and relevant United Nations organizations which can provide guidance for joint international efforts in this field. Furthermore, we believe that the multidimensional causes and scope of the situation can be assessed only on the basis of inclusive deliberations if the effective, collaborative and coordinated responses that are required are to be produced.

In this spirit, and considering that the President's statement (E/2008/66) was dated 20 May 2008, before the majority of delegations had made their statements and the debate had been finalized, I would like to share the following reflections:

1. The complexity of the global food problem makes it imperative to comprehensively evaluate the main phenomena that countries, on the basis of their own experience, have identified as possible drivers of the situation.
2. In that respect, Colombia notes that a large number of delegations, including ours, underscored the need for the international community to analyse the energy-related challenges associated with the problem, especially the pressing and growing demand for energy, as well as the impact of rising oil prices on the costs of transportation and basic inputs for food production.
3. We note, furthermore, that the aforementioned issue, which was not referred to in document E/2008/66, was given significant attention in the "issues note" provided to participants as background for the special meeting.



4. Drawing from the debate, we believe that addressing that matter is also crucial to providing an appropriate context for the analysis of the production, demand and use of biofuels, which, as indicated by several delegations, constitute a viable alternative that would help accelerate the achievement of sustainable development in many countries.
5. It is also worth indicating that numerous speakers stressed the inconvenience of formulating general and predetermined conclusions on biofuel production without considering that its nature and characteristics vary from country to country. Consequently, they emphasized the need to take into account national circumstances and to make proper distinctions between the different kinds of biofuels, so as to allow for an objective and unprejudiced evaluation of the matter.
6. Colombia considers that in the framework of that specific discussion, it is also necessary to take into account the positive experiences presented by countries where biofuel production is carried out in harmony with food security policies and yields notable environmental and social benefits.

Finally, I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Economic and Social Council.

(Signed) Claudia **Blum**
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations
